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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 6 May 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom)

- Dissemination of information on the United Nations and the international trusteeship system in Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General

- Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1990: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL TRUSTEESHIP SYSTEM IN TRUST TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL RESOLUTION 36 (III) AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 754 (VIII)) (T/1956)

The PRESIDENT: The Council will first take up agenda item 7, which relates to dissemination of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System in Trust Territories. Mr. Joe Sills, the representative of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, will introduce the report of the Secretary-General contained in document T/1956. Mr. Sills will make a statement on the activities of the United Nations relating to the dissemination of information on the United Nations in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. I now call on Mr. Sills.

Mr. SILLS (Department of Public Information): I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General, which has been distributed to members. I do not have a formal written statement. I would prefer to call attention to some of the highlights of the report and then, with your permission, Sir, to be available to answer any questions that might be raised by members of the Council.

As all members know, the Department of Public Information is charged with carrying out an information programme on the aims and objectives of the International Trusteeship System and of the United Nations as a whole. The report which members have before them covers the period from 1 May 1990 to 30 April 1991. The Department, together with the secretariat of the Trusteeship Council, has distributed a number of materials and documents related to the programmes of the United Nations and of the Council. As noted in footnote 1 of the report, the list of recipients of these materials is available in the Council secretariat. Let me say that most of the

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distribution that the Department does to this area is handled through its Information Centre at Tokyo, as many members know. That Centre keeps in close touch with the information media in the Territory and with their needs. We do regret - and it is purely a function of finances - that the Director of the Information Centre at Tokyo has not been able to pay a personal visit to the area since January 1988. There are, none the less, close contacts.

I would also like to point out that, in addition to the distribution noted in paragraph 2, other parts of the United Nations, agencies and programmes, such as the specialized agencies, distribute a great deal of their own materials to the area. They frequently do so on their own. Sometimes we are aware of it, sometimes we are not.

(Mr. Sills)

The report goes on in paragraph 3 to describe the additional materials that are being distributed in the radio and video fields.

In paragraph 4 it describes the materials which are distributed out of the Information Centre at Tokyo to a list of 92 recipients.

In this regard, I should like to refer members to the annex to the report. A request was made last year that we give the Council the specific numbers of materials distributed. As members who were with us last year will recall, I did not have those numbers from the Tokyo Information Centre at that time. This year, I made sure that we did have those figures and they are included in the annex. I shall have a word to say about some of those things in just a moment. These materials were distributed, as paragraph 4 indicates, to some 92 recipients, including government offices, libraries, radio stations, newspapers, educational institutions and individuals.

In discussing this with the Tokyo Information Centre, we learned that the distribution of materials during this period is roughly three times as great as the distribution during the comparable period last year. The Council said a year ago that it felt that we should be sending more basic documents, more information about other parts of the United Nations programme, to the area, and in response to that we have tripled the amount of materials that are being sent, as indicated in the annex.

Paragraph 5 mentions the coverage given the Council in press releases. Obviously, this meeting is being covered, as other meetings of the Council are, and all members have seen that coverage.

Paragraph 6 mentions photo coverage.

Paragraph 7 goes on to give more details concerning the specific radio programmes that were distributed to the area. The programmes "Perspective" and "Scope" both feature specific issues at the United Nations. These are

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14-minute programmes, as is the programme "Women". The programme "UN Calling Asia", which is more widely distributed, covers events of particular interest to the Asian area.

Paragraph 8 mentions the VHS copies of UN in Action and World Chronicle, which are distributed to television stations in the area. UN in Action is the three- to four-minute weekly segment highlighting a specific activity or programme of the United Nations, which is broadcast throughout the world, but more specifically on the Cable News Network, and World Chronicle, as many members are aware, is the 30-minute interview-format programme featuring leading United Nations officials.

We mention, in paragraph 9, coverage of the activities of the Council in the UN Chronicle, special publications of Objective: Justice, and coverage in Basic Facts about the United Nations.

Paragraph 10 deals with the activity of the Director of the Information Centre.

Finally, paragraph 11 mentions the creation in the Secretariat of a file - which is available for examination in the office of the Council secretariat - of all the materials that have been sent to the area. This again was the result of a helpful suggestion made a couple of years ago and the file was created, is being kept current and is available for inspection by any interested delegation.

That, I think, basically covers the report of the Secretary-General. I mentioned the annex and I wanted to say a word or two about some of the distribution patterns. Perhaps this is an effort to preclude a question or two, but maybe it will not.

For instance, there are some fairly large figures that crop up from time to time that seem out of proportion to the 79, which is the figure from

(Mr. Sills)

Headquarters, and the 92, which is the figure from Tokyo. So I looked into those figures just to see for myself.

On page 5, for instance, under "Development", the third issue of Development Forum has two feature articles which relate specifically to telecommunications in the Pacific and Trust Area. We thought that that would be a particularly interesting item and so we sent more copies of that.

At the bottom of page 5, under "Disarmament", this could be a little misleading so I wanted to correct any false impression. The figures of 480 and 960, under "Notes and Documents", are the totals of the different numbers, numbers 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and so forth. That does not mean that we sent 480 copies of each one of those documents; it is simply the total number, and when it is broken down to the number of copies for each issue, it is more in proportion and more in line. The same is true on page 6, with regard to the publications on Palestinian rights.

Finally, there is a very high figure on page 7, for International Literacy Year. These are materials which were designed particularly for students. We felt that the Literacy Year would be of great interest to students, so we sent a large number of those in order to try to meet that demand. I just wanted to mention those particular items because it looks as if the numbers are not totally consistent as regards the distribution.

If there are any questions, I shall be pleased to answer them.

The PRESIDENT: I am extremely grateful to you, Mr. Sills, for coming along to brief us on the Secretary-General's report, and I am also grateful, if I may say so, that you have clearly taken into account the concerns expressed earlier by the Council.

(The President)

May I ask now if any member has any comments to make or questions to ask on the report or, indeed, on what we have just heard?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the office of President of our Council. Allow me, too, to congratulate the Vice-President and to express the certainty that under your guidance this session of the Trusteeship Council will be fruitful. We, on our part, shall cooperate in every way possible with you, with the Vice-President, and of course with all the members of the Council.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Getting down to the substantive issue before us, first I must mention that almost all of the comments made by the Soviet delegation at the last session of the Trusteeship Council last year have been taken into account, which is very pleasant to note. In any case, we see from the report the true dimensions of the work being done in the Trust Territory by the Department of Public Information.

I have the following question for Mr. Sills. We had mentioned this topic last year; this year, in the comments made by Mr. Sills in presenting the Secretary-General's report today, we do not find a reflection of the desire that we had expressed last year, namely, to know how effective the work of disseminating United Nations materials in the Trust Territory has been. This, of course, depends primarily on the contacts which exist between the Department of Public Information and the Trust Territory. The Department of Public Information, it seems to us, should have such data. It should know how the material it sends is perceived, how it is used and what its effect is. We should like to ascertain whether the Department of Public Information has any such evaluation of that work - that is to say, does it have any feedback?

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Sills.

Mr. SILLS (Department of Public Information): First, I should like to thank the representative of the Soviet Union for his kind remarks that many of the concerns that he had expressed last year have been taken into account. We did make a sincere effort to do that, and I appreciate his remarks. I also said last year that one of the most difficult areas that we had in the Department of Public Information was that of evaluating the effectiveness and usefulness of the material, and regrettably that has not changed a great deal. We have made a lot of contacts with the area to confirm that they wanted to continue to receive the materials. That is why the figures are

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uneven for the different radio and television stations, specifically with respect to radio.

The women's programmes are received by fewer than are the perspective and the focus programmes because more have responded and indicated that they want the other programmes and asked us to run those. From the standpoint of the desire of the different recipients, particularly in the radio and television area, we do talk to them and communicate with them. We send them what they have expressed a need for. In terms of the end-users and the people who listen to the stations or read the materials and how they react to those materials, we do not have any data of the kind mentioned by the representative of the Soviet Union. We would like to have that type of data available.

We did send a questionnaire last month to all of the recipients and asked them for their reaction to the material that we had sent. I must say that the responses to that questionnaire have been very slow. At this point I cannot furnish any hard data from it. But I want to make it clearer that these will be responses sent to the stations; we do not actually have data from the people who listen to or read the material. I wish we did, but I do not have any better information to offer at this time.

The PRESIDENT: Does the representative of the Soviet Union have any further questions, or does he wish to follow up that question?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First, I should like to thank Mr. Sills for the information he has just given us. I am happy to hear that the Deparment of Public Information has sent to the Trust Territory a questionnaire about the information distributed there. Apparently some kind of response will follow. In principle, of course, it is of interest to know how many people listen to

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the broadcasts and watch the television programmes prepared by the United Nations. Naturally, data of that kind of work received by the United Nations will enable the Department to improve its own work in the future and to evaluate the needs of the Trust Territory more accurately. Once again, I thank Mr. Sills. My delegation has no further questions on the report.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Soviet Union for his kind words addressed to the Chair a little earlier in the meeting. As no other member of the Council wishes to intervene on this item at this stage, I propose to continue the discussion of this item at our next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 4

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1990: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1954)

The PRESIDENT: This item also covers the petitioners who addressed us before the week-end. I understand that at the moment there is only one petitioner present in the Chamber, Ms. Meikum Weers, who represents Otil a Beluad. Does any member wish to ask questions of the petitioner at this time? As there are no questions, I should be grateful if the petitioner would withdraw from the petitioners' table.

The petitioner withdrew.

Mr. HARKIN (United Kingdom): May I, on behalf of my delegation, congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency, and also congratulate Mr. Felix-Paganon on his election to the vice-presidency.

I have a number of questions which I would like to address to my colleagues of the Administering Authority. The first is a question which relates to the statement made by the Under-Secretary of State regarding the plebiscite for the Compact of Free Association. I would like to ask when the Administering Authority envisages that there will be another plebiscite to determine the future political status of Palau. I think it would be of very great benefit to the Council to know how the Administering Authority is planning to continue its negotiations with the Trust Territory.

I have a number of questions I would like to ask, on a more economic basis, which relate to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat. My second question - the first question in this regard - is one on which I would very much appreciate clarification; it regards section (c), dealing with international trade. It seems to me that there has been an enormous increase in the imports into the Trust Territory, from a figure of $5 million to $24.6 million within one period under review. I would very much appreciate it if the Administering Authority could explain why there was such an increase in imports; there is no indication in the report of any commensurate increase in exports.

My third question deals, again, with an item in the working paper prepared by the Secretariat. In section (g) of the report, on industry, construction and public works, it says that the economic base and the number of entrepreneurs have continued to grow, but it states that there were only 700 business establishments in the period under review, compared with 2,275 in

(Mr. Harkin, United Kingdom)

the previous period; it accounts for the decrease as being on paper only. I would very much hope that there could be some clarification as to how it is that only 700 businesses have been able to complete tax returns and provide information to the tax and revenue office. The discrepancy seems to me to be quite exceptional, and I would very much appreciate further details if the Administering Authority is able to provide them in the time available.

My fourth question is more on a speculative basis, and deals with the maritime resources of the Trust Territory I would like to know to what extent the Administering Authority is supporting the fisheries regime in the Trust Territory with regard to policing and monitoring its territorial waters. Clearly, if Palau is to become financially more independent of the Administering Authority, then it is going to require increasing income from its own resources, and I would appreciate it if the Administering Authority could illustrate or give us greater clarification as to the extent to which it is supporting or funding the policing and monitoring of the territorial waters of the Territory.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the question submitted to the Administering Authority, the United States, and I invite the Administering Authority to respond, if it so wishes, at this meeting to any or all of the questions or, failing that, to consider the points they would wish to make and revert to us at our next session.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I believe we can respond to all those questions; I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his interest.

I will, with your permission, Sir, call upon the representatives from within my delegation of the Department of Interior and of the Government of Palau to expand on a couple of points.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

With respect to the question of another plebiscite, to give a first-level, general response, no specific date has been set. As reported to the Council in our opening statements, we, as the Administering Authority, are engaged in discussions with the Government of Palau on where and how to proceed and what to do next in this regard, and the leadership of Palau is actively exploring, in Palau, whether and what sort of a national consensus can be developed to guide the Palauans themselves in their approach to the situation in which we find ourselves following the failure of the last plebiscite to obtain the requisite 75 per cent. There are therefore no immediate or artificial deadlines, but there is an active consultation process involving both the Administering Authority and the Government of Palau. We will of course keep the Council informed.

As mentioned both in my opening statement and in connection with President Etpison's opening statement, there was a round of talks with the Department of State and the Department of Interior and the Government of Palau on the eve of this very meeting of the Council to address this question and examine the options, including the question of independence, which we are prepared to consider although our strong preference as Administering Authority remains the negotiated Compact.

As for the question of imports, it is my - quick - understanding from expert advice that the surge or increase in the number resulted almost exclusively from imports for construction of the hospital, which is a major, multimillion dollar project, one on which I will ask Assistant Secretary Guerra to comment a little further.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

The number of businesses appears to be a paper consideration in that earlier numbers included unregistered, informal businesses; a refining of the statistics for those businesses which are registered in a formal sense accounts for this number, but perhaps my colleague Mr. Uherbelau would have some comments on that matter.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

With regard to the fourth question on fisheries, as indicated in our report as Administering Authority and in statements before the Council, fisheries is perhaps second only to tourism as a major industry which we, the Administering Authority, have gone to some lengths to promote. With specific reference to the question of enforcement of a regime which allows the Palauans themselves to profit from the resource, as opposed to poachers, or which allows the Palauan Government to institute a realistic control regime, the United States has recently transferred a 95-foot Coast Guard patrol boat to the Government of Palau and the United States Coast Guard is providing training in its operation and maintenance. I should like, if I may, to request you, Mr. President, to call on Assistant Secretary Guerra for amplification of any of those points, and then on Mr. Uherbelau, who may also wish to comment - or possibly correct me if I have misspoken in any of those regards.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure the representative of the United States needs no correction, but I happily call on Mrs. Guerra.

Mrs. GUERRA (Special Adviser): I should like just to add a couple of additional points with regard to the question in reference to the increase in imports.

We would say that those can be attributed to the hospital construction which, as the Ambassador has mentioned, is now nearing completion. It is expected to be completed by 1992 at a cost of approximately $25 million.

Another increase we have seen in Palau is the growth in hotel construction. I am happy to say that these hotels are privately owned, and others to be built in the future will also be privately owned.

I think my colleague, Mr. Uherbelau, can best address the question of exports.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Uherbelau.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Adviser): Indeed, the representative of the Administering Authority needs no correction on our part. We agree with the information he has already provided by way of response to the questions put by the representative of the United Kingdom.

On the question of when the plebiscite will be held on the status issue, as the President in his opening statement to the Council indicated, we have requested the Administering Authority to agree to set up a joint working group to review possible areas of modification to the Compact of Free Association. Unless and until that group is formed, we will not be a position to tell the Council when the next plebiscite will take place.

Moving on to the trade imbalance between imports and exports, I have with me certain statistics indicating the gross tonnage of exports, as well as the value of the fish exports from Palau to the sashimi market in Japan. Since this is information we gathered just before we left Palau, I should like, if it does not contravene the procedure of the Council, to submit it later for the record. It will indicate how much fish is being exported from Palau to the sashimi market in Japan.

I am not sure I have the answer to the third question, but the response given by the Administering Authority is, I suppose, sufficient.

As to the fourth question, on maritime surveillance and enforcement, it is indeed a fact that the Republic has inherited a Coast Guard cutter from the Administering Authority to carry out these activities. The Administering Authority has been supportive in assisting us to capture poachers and stop illegal fishing.

Mr. HARKIN (United Kingdom): I am very grateful to the representatives of the Administering Authority for the clarification they have given.

I should like, if I may, to ask a subsequent question to my first regarding the plebiscite. I very much appreciate the position of the Administering Authority with regard to the future political status of the Trust Territory, but I should like its representative to tell us what steps it has taken with regard to informing the residents in the Trust Territory of the option of independence, and to what degree the residents of Palau are aware of the likelihood of this ever becoming a reality for them, given that the Administering Authority has made very plain its own preference for their future status.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): As indicated, the question only came up in discussion last week at the State Department between representatives of the State Department and the Department of the Interior and visiting President Etpison and representatives of his Government. It was ventilated at that meeting last Wednesday; there were Congressional hearings which touched, at least briefly on it, last Thursday; and it was restated in the process here last Friday. As stated by Mr. Uherbelau a few minutes ago, the representatives of Palau indicated their desire, or their proposal, to consider a working group.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

As I understand it, the President has returned, leaving here last Friday after his very welcome, distinguished appearance before the Council. His following up with his Government would be the main mechanism for discussion on the islands or energizing the political community on the islands to consider the new possibilities or the situation that arises in the wake of the conversations in Washington last week. The material is also newsworthy, and one can expect discussion in the local media.

Other than making our statements available to the Government and to the media, I do not think we as the Administering Authority at this stage have any intent to publicize anything by lobbying for any position. Instead, we shall continue to make information available to both the media and the Government of Palau and to pursue with the Government of Palau consideration of the next steps as expeditiously as possible, consistent with the desires of the public of Palau.

Mr. FELIX-PAGANON (France) (interpretation from French): Like my British colleague, I should like to thank the Administering Authority for the quality of the report submitted to us and to congratulate it on that report, which is very full and detailed. Indeed, it seems exhaustive, to the extent even that it is difficult to find anything to be said against it or any substantive question to ask.

However, two points drew my attention. They are quite minor, but I have some questions about them.

My first question concerns the agreement with the Japanese Fisheries Association. The report says that the agreement, scheduled to end on 31 July 1990, had been extended, and a new round of negotiations was to begin

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in mid-December 1990. What is the status of the negotiations now? Did they resume in mid-December?

My second question has to do with the secondary education system. The report emphasizes that at the secondary level the number of registrations has gone down by about 10 per cent. What is the reason for this drop in the number of pupils registering at secondary level? Has it to do with changes in population or are factors other than demographic factors involved?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I would refer those questions to the most knowledgeable member of my delegation, Mr. Uherbelau.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Uherbelau.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Adviser): Last year we extended the fishing agreement with the Japanese for six months, from 1 August to 31 January 1991. Since then we have met with the Japanese once more, in January, and the agreement has been extended for a further six months, to expire on 31 July this year. We shall get together with them on 24 May for preliminary discussions and shall meet again some time in June for final negotiations to find out whether we can once again negotiate a one-year agreement, to run from 1 August this year to 31 July 1992. There has been no interruption; there has been no breaking off of the fishing agreement with the Japanese.

With regard to the 10-per-cent drop in the enrolment of high-school students, as we told the Council last year, or perhaps two years ago, this is largely because some of our students are going outside Palau, to Guam, Saipan and perhaps the United States, for high-school education; they have had to go abroad for high-school education rather than enrolling in the six or seven high schools in Palau.

Ms. LIU Jinfeng (China) (interpretation from Chinese): First, Sir, I wish to congratulate you on your election as President. I believe that under your leadership we shall achieve success. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the representative of France, who has just been elected Vice-President.

We have studied the report of the Administering Authority with care. We are happy to note that since 1989, when we joined the Council, the people of Palau have achieved progress in the political, economic and other fields. Palau's future political status must be decided by the people of Palau themselves. The representative of the United Kingdom has already mentioned some problems in that regard. We wish to know whether the Administering Authority has considered having a mission sent to Palau to study the situation there.

After reading the report, we believe that progress has been made with regard to tourism and fisheries in Palau, but we feel that the people of Palau are also concerned about problems of agricultural and industrial development, which are important for the nation's progress. May we have more detailed information about them?

(Ms. Liu Jinfeng, China)

I also have a specific question on part V of the report, "Economic Development", with regard to the labour force. The report notes that since last year the labour force has decreased from 1,200 to 964. Some 2,000 non-resident workers are employed. I wonder whether the Administering Authority has given that any consideration and whether the employment of native workers will continue to decrease. Are there any plans to solve this problem?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): As a follow-up to the general questions raised earlier as to when, how or whether there might be another plebiscite and what is being done in that regard, I cannot add much to my earilier comments because the last round of discussions between representatives of my Government, as Administering Authority, and representatives of the Government of Palau was held only a week ago, as I mentioned, and it will now take a certain period of time for those discussions to be assessed by the parties, and particularly by the representatives of the Palauan Government, first and foremost among whom is President Etpison, who returned to Palau only last Friday to pursue the question how to proceed.

We do not at this point perceive a need to send a mission because we have very good communications with Palau. We have resident representation there and open lines to the President and to all levels of Government and political leadership in Palau. At this point, therefore, the principal next phase of activity will be assessment and consultations by the Palauans themselves on the follow-up to President Etpison's visit to Washington. We as Administering Authority are ready to pursue that at any time and will ourselves be considering how we might help to expedite the process.

With respect to the question of additional economic advancement, tourism and fishing have naturally come to the fore because of the potential of the

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

islands and the community. However, there are also some other areas mentioned in the report. We have with us today the Minister of Administration of Palau, who will be proceeding to Washington, along with other Palauan leaders, for the annual budget hearings. That kind of dialogue includes exploration of other possibilities.

On Friday both Assistant Secretary Guerra and Mr. Uherbelau talked about the question of developing a master plan, which has been recommended as a way to try to give broad consideration to other possibilities. Palau's population of only 14,000, the size of its economy and the nature of its geographical situation do not admit of the full panoply of options. For example, I am not sure that it could support a steel mill in the near future. Indeed, that is only one of its difficulties.

However, given those circumstances, how can one proceed to diversification and to a stronger and self-sufficient economy? As the report indicates - and as I have said before - tourism and fishing are perhaps the two leading sectors of the economy for development at this time. Neither we nor the Government of Palau are putting all our eggs in one basket - or even in those two baskets - and I would emphasize the potential value of our addressing a master plan for economic development, as indicated in the Secretary of the Interior's Order, one that we all hope will start to single out or suggest ways in which, working together, we can improve the level of indigenous economic activity, as well as promote investment and what Assistant Secretary Guerra referred to the other day as the true engine of development, namely, private enterprise, carried out in a constructive way that will preserve the culture and the environment.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

The last point raised by the representative of China had to do with the question of employment of Palauan citizens and the decline in those numbers. As indicated in the report, there is a procedure whereby resident Palauan citizens are given preference in any possible employment opportunity on the island. Only to the extent that no Palauan comes forward is the importation of labour from outside contemplated. The numbers of employed - Filipinos and other alien labour - as indicated in the report are in a sense proof that Palauans have been given every opportunity to take jobs of varying degrees of skills. There are training programmes for some of those skills. Much of the employment available at the present time is in the construction field, and such jobs call for skills that can - not in every case, but in many cases - be developed by the Palauans if they so wish. Every effort is being made to do that.

I was speaking earlier today with Mr. Uherbelau about the questions that are periodically raised about unemployment and why there are no comparable statistics in the report or elsewhere.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

There are two factors here: The first, which I have just mentioned, is that, as a first-level measurement, the fact that alien labour is engaged indicates that Palauans have either opted not to apply for employment or are otherwise engaged, since employment, including unskilled labour, is offered to Palauans first. The second factor is that under the existing customs of the islands there is no centralized governmental system of unemployment, as there is the West, whereby one can measure the number of unemployed by looking at the list of those people who have registered themselves for benefits or for assistance in finding employment. There is instead a probably much more effective system of extended-family-type arrangements whereby Palauans who are unemployed either by choice or otherwise or who are between positions receive assistance within a traditional extended-family structure. This does not generate numbers that can be used for statistics.

In that connection, I may say that there is continuing concern on the part of the Government of Palau, with the active support of the Administering Authority, to ensure that the system of preferential employment for Palauans is upheld, that it works effectively and that it is not circumvented by employers.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Like other representatives, I have noted that this year's report is significantly more detailed than past reports, for which we are grateful. However, we have quite a few questions for the Administering Authority on that report.

We know that Secretarial Order 3142 of the United States Department of the Interior was signed in October 1990. We know too that some years earlier Secretarial Order 3119 had been issued. There was a significant gap between

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

the two orders, from 1987 to 1990. How do the representatives of the Administering Authority assess the issuance of the new Secretarial Order?

I am asking this question because, as is known, the office of High Commissioner was abolished by Order 3119; the new order restores something similar to that office. What happened between 1987 and 1990 to make it necessary to restore a stronger Administering Authority presence? It is my understanding that the new Secretarial Order resulted from an agreement of some kind with the Palauan authorities and was apparently in line with needs they expressed. The report states that there were negotiations between representatives of the United States and of Palau, but it is silent about the substance of those negotiations - what desires were expressed by Palau and what ideas were expressed and promises made by the Administering Authority.

I think the Council would be interested in hearing the views of the representative of the Administering Authority about the ongoing changes, especially in the light of what is stated in the report:

(spoke in English)

> "In view of the ongoing responsibilities of the Administering Authority and the continuation of the application of the Trusteeship Agreement to Palau, at the end of Fiscal Year 1990 discussions were under way concerning a reorganization of the Administering Authority's organizational structure necessary for the fulfilment of the trusteeship responsibilities for the foreseeable future". (T/1954, annex, p. 5)

(continued in Russian)

That says a great deal, and yet at the same time it tells the reader nothing. We should like to know what lies behind that paragraph of the report, along with an answer to the first part of our question.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I appreciate the interest of our colleague from the Soviet Union. As I indicated in my opening remarks last Friday, the introduction of the Secretary of the Interior's Order came after a number of criticisms expressed by the General Accounting Office, an arm of the United States Congress, by Palauans and by others and was intended to address the situation in the islands.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

I myself will not expand on that, since we are graced with the presence of Assistant Secretary Guerra, who is the official of the United States Government directly responsible for overseeing implementation, development and application of that Order. I would ask that she should be called on to respond further to the question.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mrs. Guerra.

Mrs. GUERRA (Special Adviser): In response to the question asked by the representative of the Soviet Union, I should like to give a little chronology of how we reached the point of issuing a new Secretarial Order.

Because the United States had assumed that free-association status for Palau was imminent, the United States accorded increasing amounts of self-government to Palau over the past decade. It was believed that if mistakes were made, they were a necessary part of the process of development and self-government. Mistakes were made, most notably in the financial area. One thing that happened over the last decade was the unwarranted amount of debt that Palau incurred, such as the debt in connection with the IPSECO power plant, which has gone unpaid to date. Four Palau Governments also entered into contracts for the construction of roads without a source of funding and have defaulted on the debts. The Palau National Congress - the OEK - consistently appropriated money amounts in excess of revenue. For example, pay raises were given in December 1989 to Government employees without a source of revenue. Eventually, those had to be stopped.

We were concerned about the possibility that Palau's financial solvency and credibility would be damaged internationally. After the seventh plebiscite and after failure to approve the Compact of Free Association on 6 February 1990, it became apparent that the assumption of the imminent

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implementation of the Compact was no longer viable. At that time, after five or six months, I opened discussions with President Etpison of Palau, as well as with representatives who first came to a meeting in Honolulu in June 1990. Following that, I sent my Budget Director and representatives of my office to meet with the leadership in Palau to begin discussions on how we could best implement something that would get Palau back into a healthy state of financial recovery.

That meeting was followed by another meeting in September with myself, representatives of the Secretary and members of my staff. We met in Guam for some more discussions. Those were followed by a meeting in Washington, D.C., where the Secretary of the Interior invited the Palauans to come for meetings. On 15 October 1990, following the meeting in Washington, D.C., the new Secretarial Order was issued as Order 3142.

That Order did several things that were a departure from the one current at that time. It established a representative in Palau who would be the Director of the Trust Territory Office and would report directly to the Assistant Secretary for Territorial and International Affairs. We viewed the Director's Office as being very vital to increased communications with Palau, as well as actively assisting the Government of Palau in restructuring its local State and national budget systems and in planning and preparing a national development plan. There was a great need for increased communications with the Government of Palau, and I am happy to say that in January 1991 we opened that Office. There was good representation from all the leadership and the people in Palau.

The Secretarial Order also required that the national and State appropriations submitted to the Assistant Secretary for approval should be

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accompanied by a funds-availability analysis before they were approved. I also mentioned in my statement, as well as in some of the responses today, that we have been working with Palau. As a result of the Secretarial Order, there was a request for a national master development plan. This is considered something that will help Palau into the future. We view this as the substance being guided and the decisions being made by the people of Palau. We have already had two major meetings in which we addressed what will go into the master plan.

In the discussions, my representatives and I have made it very clear to the Government and people of Palau that this is their master plan. We view the master plan as the key to proper economic development in protection of Palau's environmental resources. There is also another requirement resulting from the new Secretarial Order. Construction projects in excess of $250,000 will be approved on the basis of financial viability and consistency with the development plan. We feel strongly that with return to good fiscal policies and accountability, Palau will be exercising greater self-government, free of conflict in budget problems.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The information presented to us by the representative of the Administering Authority significantly helps us to understand the current situation.

At the same time, it should be noted that, as mentioned by the representative of the United States, it is only now that action is being taken to correct the mistakes made during those years. By the way, one of our questions concerned how the situation with IPSECO was resolved. Now we have just learned that that situation remains unchanged.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

My next question is this: on page 17 of the report, reference is made to economic advancement in the Trust Territory, a question which, by the way, was just raised by Mrs. Guerra with regard to the financing of the State budget for the Trust Territory. Are there any possibilities - or, at least, were any possibilities discussed - for increasing the level of self-financing for the Palau State budget? If such possibilities exist, what does the Administering Authority see as ways of increasing the level of self-financing?

The PRESIDENT: Would any representative of the Administering Authority care to comment on that question?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I think it perhaps goes without saying that all of us represented in this delegation, Administering Authority and Palauans alike, and maybe even more particularly the Administering Authority, would be very happy if whatever the representative of the Soviet Union means by self-financing could be achieved, rather than dependence on the grants and other contributions from the funds of the United States Treasury. I do not think there is an easy and simple answer to the question. The whole thrust of the efforts in economic advancement has, in fact, been to develop the economy of the islands in a way that would make them more self-sustaining, generate larger revenues for the benefit of the population and decrease the dependence on the United States Treasury. To some extent, the next, more sophisticated answer to the question resides, perhaps, in the development of the master plan mentioned by Assistant Secretary Guerra, concerning which there have already been at least a couple of important meetings, and the whole point of which is to identify those segments of the economy, those areas of potential that can be pursued to set priorities and so

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forth. As I also mentioned earlier, the representatives of the Government of Palau will be in Washington on Thursday of this week to pursue budget hearings before the Congress of the United States, and I will certainly endeavour to make available to our colleagues from the Soviet Union a record of those hearings if and when it is published, because clearly, one part of the answer is what is now being requested and why. I wish that there were a straightforward answer, and I think that on closer reading there are some answers in the report. As I have said, perhaps there will be more answers in the budget hearings this week that respond to the particular interests expressed. But fundamentally, what is involved, in the first instance, is the financing of infrastructure. On the page to which the representative of the Soviet Union referred I see the Department of Interior Grant for fiscal year 1990, $14.3 million, including $300,000 for the College of Micronesia, $131,000 for satellite communications, $247,000 for a Public Auditor, $6 million for the construction of the Palau hospital, $980,000 for work on the Koror/Babelthuap bridge, and so forth. Self-financing is, I think, a premature concept in that sense. But it is certainly pertinent to address the question how one goes from those kinds of projects, which at this point in time have to be largely if not wholly financed by external grants, how one transforms the economy to generate the kind of revenue that could meet those needs, given the constraints that I mentioned earlier - size of population, island economy, distance from major external economies, and the like. In some ways, the difficulty of coming to grips with immediate specific projects, plans, priorities, in response to the question raised by the representative of the Soviet Union, is what underlies the master plan.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

I would like to be able to give more specific answers. I am sure there are various aspects that could be addressed by Mr. Uherbelau or by Assistant Secretary Guerra. Obviously, we are happy to discuss some of these things in an informal setting. But, in general, the difficulty of coming to grips in a definitive way with these very demanding challenges underlying the master plan concept is the stuff and substance of the discussions on looking for more funds that the Palau Government has and that we, the Administration, have with the Congress every year. I think that as much as can be said about the general directions, pending further progress on the master plan is in our report.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the United States for giving us the information we requested. This will be of help in compiling a picture of the plans that the Administering Authority now has with regard to the development of the Trust Territory. I had a question on my list about the general concept, the general understanding of what I can best refer to in Russian as this "general plan" - the term in English is "master plan", or perhaps "master key". Let us hope that this key will help us to open the way to prosperity for the people of Palau.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

I have a few more questions to put to the Administering Authority. I hope I will not seem to be too importunate here in the eyes of the Administering Authority, but to get things quite clear, I would like clarification of just a few points in the report submitted by the Administering Authority for this last period.

The report, specifically, on page 17, refers to war claims. On page 17 it states that "Final payment of the Title I war claims is nearly complete". I would like some clarification here: perhaps I missed something in the statistical data, perhaps I missed the figures, but I would like to have clarification as to what sums of money have not been paid off yet.

My next question relates to the inflation rate; obviously, this will also tie in with the last question, to a certain extent, in so far as it would have an impact on the amount of payment due. The report states how much was paid, alongside, in the same laconic way, the statement that President Etpison was informed that $120,901 was received in Palau, to cover the exact amount of this item.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): On that particular question, there is a long legal history; part of the reason for its being a bit truncated in the report is that the matter of the so-called "Title I" and "Title II" claims and their periods and payments has been dealt with over a long period of time. I think that in this case, for the sake of precision, Assistant Secretary Guerra - who has a table of the payments and a brief explanation of them - would be pleased to extract from this the relevant points, prepare a reply in writing and distribute it elsewhere, if it is acceptable to our colleague from the Soviet Union. This does not involve any

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

particular secret or anything of that kind; the reason is simply that making a precise statement of the numbers and what they apply to off the top of one's head is somewhat difficult, so I would I ask the indulgence of our colleague from the Soviet Union in allowing us to give him a brief note in pursuit of this matter, of which we shall inform the other members of the Council too.

The PRESIDENT: That appears to be acceptable. May I ask whether our colleague from the Soviet Union has any further questions at this stage?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Of course, when I ask this question, it is understood that if the representative of the Administering Authority finds it difficult to give an immediate answer, then of course he can have as much time as the Council has at its disposal to give us the answer at any time.

My next question relates to the section on employment in Palau. On page 19, the report states that foreign workers significantly outnumber workers drawn from the local population. This is not a new problem; it existed in previous years too, and in one way or another the Trusteeship Council has already turned its attention to it. Now, as we understand it, the ratio is almost one to three against the local population.

The answer used to be to the effect that there were not enough fully trained or, shall we say, qualified workers to do a particular job, but obviously, as time moves on and as the Territory is developed, this ratio should change in favour of the local population.

At the same time, in the report, as we can see, it is stated that the level of unemployment in the Territory was impossible to determine because of a number of circumstances and the lack of financing for the purpose. This kind of situation gives cause for concern in any case, and I would like the

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Administering Authority to explain what measures are being taken to get things moving forward from the impasse, the standstill, or, one might even say, from the backwards slide that has arisen in the field of employment for the local population. What measures are being taken, what assessments are being made, what plans are there in the minds of the Administering Authority in this area of the Territory's development?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I should like, if I may, to ask Mr. Uherbelau of our delegation to address the general picture of employment of Palauans and this increase, which may have to do with recent economic developments, in the level of nonresident workers employed in the private sector.

However, by way of introduction, I must say I have a little difficulty with the premise of our colleague from the Soviet Union that there is, I believe the word was translated as "impasse", or problem or situation; as I endeavoured to explain when responding to the representative of the People's Republic of China, the absence of unemployment statistics does not mean that there is unemployment: rather, it refers to or derives from the fact that because of the extended-family nature of the society, people do not come to a central place and register. However, it is known throughout the islands that Palauans receive preference for any new employment opportunity, so that a non-resident worker comes only after it has been determined that there is no Palauan interested in the job.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

Therefore, far from an impasse, we have a situation that is perhaps rather more fortunate than that which exists either in my country or in the country of our Soviet colleague in terms of actual unemployment, where, unfortunately, we have statistics that reflect a problem and we do not have an extended family or an employment preference system that takes care of it. But without further philosophizing, I shall ask Mr. Uherbelau to comment on the question of employment and the importing, so to speak, of alien workers and their numbers as given in the report.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Uherbelau.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Adviser): I shall just supplement the response that has already been given by the representatives of the Administering Authority. Actually, we see this as a strengthening of the economy of the private sector of the Republic. Perhaps the rate of employment opportunities in Palau is increasing so fast that we are not able to produce local people to meet the requirements of the labour force. Therefore, we have to employ alien workers. The figure of 964 Palauans in the private sector is perhaps misleading because it does not take into account the self-employed fishermen, the subsistence farmers, and others in the construction trade who are not paid and thus are not included in the overall number of local workers as compared with the alien workers who are being imported into the Republic. But as I have said, I think we should also look at this as a healthy sign of the growth of the private sector economy. Perhaps our population growth rate is not fast enough to make it possible for us to catch up with the opportunities.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am grateful for the answers given by the representative of the Administering Authority, Mr. Wilkinson, and by Mr. Uherbelau. Of course, the fact that there are no statistics does not indicate at all that there are any unemployed and if there are no unemployed at all, it redounds to the honour of the work done by the Administering Authority and the local authorities. It is simply the presence of such data in the report that prompted the question raised by the Soviet delegation.

I have a number of other questions about the situation in the Trust Territory. My next question relates to the state of the infrastructure in the Trust Territory. On page 20 of the report it is stated that: "No appreciable improvements have been made to Palau's road system in the past year." What steps do the Administering Authority and the local authorities in the Trust Territory intend to take in order to improve this situation? We know that the climatic conditions do have a certain impact on the condition of the roads, particularly the non-asphalted roads made of local materials. I should like to know whether this situation is also reflected in the master plan and what measures are envisaged to improve this situation.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): Obviously the question of transportation by land is a difficult one for the reasons adduced in the report and perhaps also as the representative of the Soviet Union rightly indicated. As I have said, page 20 of the report, cited by our Soviet colleague, indicates that "the new U.S. Federal Operations and Maintenance programme is expected to address this situation ...", that is, the matter of improvements in the road system. The stated objective of that programme is to improve capabilities in the areas - and this perhaps refers back to the thrust of some earlier questions - namely, development of the capacity and capability

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in the islands to maintain and operate roads and other government facilities. In 1989, the Department of the Interior, aided by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, hired a private engineering contractor to examine the operation and maintenance needs in each of the areas. The contractor's task was to define the baseline and develop an action plan for the kind of improvements that are suggested on page 20 of the report.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

An action plan was in fact mutually agreed upon by all parties in November 1990, after the date of the report. The Department of the Interior has current appropriations of $7.9 million for both the fiscal years 1990 and 1991 and has put in the budget an additional $2.5 million to help the local governments implement these plans. The first two grants from the Maintenance Assistance Fund were received in Palau in January of this year. They involve an on-site engineer and a condition inventory assessment of the IPSECO power plant. An additional four grant applications from Palau are pending.

So, in sum, I am pleased to report that a specific programme has been developed by the Administering Authority in consultation with the local governments. We have a baseline, we have projects under way, or on the drawing board, to go ahead, with, I hope, a welcome and successful emphasis on development of on-site capabilities.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am grateful for the clarification given by the representative of the United States. The reason why I asked this question is that the sum of money quoted for use for these purposes seems to differ from the estimate given in the report for the needs in this area, which is much higher.

On page 27, the report states that a complete overhaul of both the roads in Palau and the bridge would cost about $10 million and that $1.2 million may be provided in 1991. In any event, the clarification just given by the representative of the Administering Authority will be of assistance in trying to shed some light on the situation.

I have a few more questions, and one in particular has to do with the chapter on social advancement.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Perhaps I have missed something somewhere, but I do not really understand what "ROPSSS" means. What kind of system is this ROPSSS - is it a social-security system? It is stated that there are also totalization agreements between Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. We do not fully understand what kind of agreements these are, what they represent. It appears that the meaning of this part of the report will have to be explained to the representatives in the Trusteeship Council since it relates in general to the social-security system, which evidently will be involved, in one way or another, in future action to be taken with regard to the Trust Territory.

The report states that no agreement has been reached between the social-security system of the United States and this rather enigmatic ROPSSS system, and so we need some clarification about this part of the report. It is rather intriguing, and therefore it is of interest to know what all this means.

The PRESIDENT: I invite the representative of the United States to comment on this terrifying acronym.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): The six letters stand for the Republic of Palau Social Security System, and as indicated, for those of us whose countries have social-security systems or their equivalent, it is the system as now tailored to Palau to provide for benefits to workers or their survivors after they retire or otherwise become eligible for the benefits. The essence of the system is derivable from the information on page 46, at least as it is now set up. I draw the attention of my distinguished colleague from the Soviet Union to the section on page 46 entitled "Contributions". Money goes into the social-security system trust fund, which consists of contributions from workers and their employers, together with a relatively

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small amount which is derived from penalties and interest, as indicated on page 46. The money from that fund is then correspondingly available for disbursements, as indicated on the same page, by way of payments to workers or their survivors who are entitled to the benefits, with a relatively small amount earmarked for administrative expenses.

The references to agreements and arrangements on page 45 refer to the situation that arises because a social-security system covering other entities not now part of the Trust Territory was originally set up, and as those entities went their separate ways, it became necessary to restructure the system to fit the particular case.

If I may, I should like to ask Mr. Uherbelau from my delegation, as someone who is much closer to the scene than I, to amplify or comment on any of these points.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Uherbelau.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Adviser): The original unified social-security system for the entire former Trust Territory - the Northern Marianas, the four constituent States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau - has been continued, in search of a higher return from a bigger trust fund to be invested in one bank. But we have been attempting to decentralize the system so that the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshalls and Palau would each manage its own system. Agreements must be reached between the three Governments as to how to do that without adversely affecting the trust investment of the three Governments.

The PRESIDENT: Before we continue, I wish to mention that I hope in due course to open consideration of agenda item 6, "Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories", and to spend one or two minutes at the end of our meeting, if the Council agrees, considering the timing of our next meeting and our future work.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am especially grateful to the representatives of the United States for the clarification given regarding the social-security system in the Trust Territory. I also thank Mr. Uherbelau, since he was the one who shed light on the agreements to be reached between the various parts of Micronesia. That was what my question was aimed at.

Did I correctly understand, Mr. President, that we are now to move to another agenda item, or may we continue with our questioning?

The PRESIDENT: The representative of the Soviet Union may certainly continue. The thrust of my remark was simply that I shall need a few minutes

(The President)

towards the end of our meeting to introduce one more item and discuss the time of our next meeting.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): My next question again relates to Part VII of the report, "Social Advancement". We are particularly interested in the question of medicine - not pharmaceuticals, of course, but medical services.

The report makes mention, as did the representatives of the Administering Authority, of a new hospital, which is now almost complete, so that we may hope that it will soon go into operation. I am interested in the extent to which the hospital can meet the needs of the population of Palau. To what extent will its opening facilitate an improvement in medical services?

My second question also relates to medical services. To judge from the report, the situation with regard to medical staff, or at least to doctors, continues to be very difficult. That situation is not new; it has gone on for quite a time. There must be a way to resolve the problem. I have been in the Trusteeship Council for more than 10 years, and at each session we have returned to this question in one way or another.

We see some progress, in the sense that there are now more students studying in various medical schools and other institutions. We assume that they will fill the empty posts in Palau's medical system. Those doctors who were young at the time of the Administering Authority's earlier reports are now retiring, and now once again a difficult situation is arising with respect to staff. Clearly, we must find effective approaches to the problem. I am thinking aloud now: perhaps we should consider asking the World Health Organization to establish a special fund that could attract medical staff to work in the Trust Territory. We must find potential ways to correct the situation.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): The question of the hospital and the providers of health services is being addressed cooperatively by the Administering Authority and the Government of Palau. As our colleague from the Soviet Union has suggested, these are long-standing issues. Programmes indicated in the report have been drawn up. I have a picture of the new hospital, which we hope will be completed soon. I shall ask Assistant Secretary Guerra and Mr. Uherbelau to comment on where we stand and how we have done and to give some details.

Mrs. GUERRA (Special Adviser): In reference to the funding for the hospital, let me just say that in fiscal 1982 Congress first appropriated $480,000, which was to be used for the design of a new hospital to replace the ageing MacDonald Memorial Hospital on the same site. In fiscal years 1986 and 1988, Congress appropriated $10 million for the construction of a 79-bed hospital on the site of the existing hospital. Owing to subsequent local decisions, the site was moved to another location, which created some delays but, at the same time, increased the amount of funding that would be needed for the hospital. That escalated from an original $10 million to approximately $25 million. In 1990, Congress appropriated $5.9 million, and in 1991 there was an additional $7,162,000 appropriation. The 1992 budget contains a request for $2 million to complete the funding for the final phase of the hospital, which is expected to be completed at the end of 1992. To date, 40 per cent of the funding appropriated has been expended.

As for the programmes that we currently have, there is a training programme in Ponape, where medical officers are being trained. I am also happy to report that we have the first United States-trained Palauan doctor, who is practicing there now. We also have United States Public Health Service doctors who are currently in Palau providing services, as well as some other programmes, which I think Mr. Uherbelau can expand upon.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Uherbelau.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Adviser): To supplement the response just given by Mrs. Guerra, I should like to say that we do have an ongoing Department of the Interior technical-assistance programme extended to both the administration and the delivery of medical services in Palau now. The hospital administrator is under that programme. We have a total of five medical doctors at present practicing at the MacDonald Memorial Hospital. As

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Mrs. Guerra also mentioned, we have one Palauan doctor who has been in private practice for several years now, employing local nurses and some practical nurses from the Philippines.

This year we have one Palauan who will be graduating from medical school; two will be graduating in one or two years' time. As Mrs. Guerra said, there are three or four students currently enrolled in the Ponape Medical Centre for a medical officers' training programme. We believe that two or three will be coming next year.

As to the future staffing of the new hospital and whether it will meet the medical needs of the Republic, we can assure the representative of the Soviet Union that the quality of medical care will be stepped up as a result of the new hospital. The Government is currently discussing the possibility of having Mercy International Corporation take over the entire management of the new hospital when it is completed and operational, as it has in the Marshall Islands.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am grateful to the representatives of the United States and to Mr. Uherbelau for their explanations. Their statements are very encouraging on the whole, and we hope that everything will proceed normally.

I began my questions today with the data contained in the report of the Administering Authority concerning the conclusion of hospital construction. The cost is somewhere around $25 million. The report, however, states that approximately $800,000 is still needed for equipment, medical facilities and the like. From the answers we have received, it would seem that everything will be concluded satisfactorily.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Since the hour is late, I am prepared to conclude the Soviet delegation's questioning for today, so that some time may be devoted to the other items on our agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I am grateful to the representative of the Soviet Union, and I would assure him that the agenda item will remain open at the next meeting if any delegation should choose to return with further questions.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: Looking at our programme, the Council has not yet taken up agenda items 6, "Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General (T/1957)". I shall not invite comments on the Secretary-General's report at this meeting, but I have it in mind to revert to agenda item 6, which I have just mentioned, and to agenda items 7, "Dissemination of information", with which we started this afternoon's meeting, and 4, the questioning of the Administering Authority, at the next meeting of the Council. I propose, for the time being, to hold over agenda item 5, "Examination of petitions", and to take that up in a formal sense at the next meeting as well. I hope that that is acceptable to all concerned.

I am also wondering - and I shall seek members' advice and views - when it would be best to hold our next meeting. Our provisional timetable suggests a couple of meetings tomorrow, Tuesday, on the agenda items we have begun to examine today. My impression is that we have in fact come quite a long way in examining them, and, if I may say so, I think that the question-and-answer session has been extremely valuable and will help all delegations.

(The President)

Although I have not spent 10 years in the Council, I have spent five or six in two different chunks, and I am also conscious of the fact that members always like a little bit of time to prepare for their statements during the general debate, which begins on Wednesday, 8 May, and continues on Thursday, 9 May. I am further very conscious of the fact that, to put it no higher, it is extremely helpful to those eventually elected to serve as our drafting committee to take into account the views expressed in the general debate.

Taking all those factors into consideration, my suggestion - subject to the views of members of the Council - would be that we should not meet tomorrow but should meet at 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 8 May, at which time we shall discuss the following items: we shall continue with agenda item 4, the questioning of the Administering Authority - and if, by the way, any of the petitioners who addressed us on Friday are present here on Wednesday, those who wish will have an opportunity to question them.

(The President)

We shall continue and, I hope, conclude agenda item 6, "Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories", on which we normally do not spend too much time, since the Secretary-General's report on this matter is normally very detailed.

Having done all that we would briefly introduce agenda items 8 to 11: "Cooperation with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination"; "Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination"; "Attainment of self-government or independence by the Trust Territories"; and "Cooperation with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples". My guess is that none of those items will take us an undue length of time, and it would be my intention to open the general debate on Wednesday morning. It would continue on Thursday. That would give members of the drafting committee a valuable chance to hear the major interventions in the general debate before they begin to draft their report.

I wonder if those proposals are acceptable.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): We would certainly endeavour to cooperate with the schedule just outlined. Recognizing that it might require accelerated preparation of general debate statements and so forth, we none the less think it is desirable and, to use a terrible American phrase, cost-effective to follow the kind of work plan the President has suggested, trying to handle as much work as we can during a single meeting, which maximizes the efficiency of our utilization of interpretation services, the Chamber and so forth. From our standpoint, we shall certainly put our shoulder to the wheel to meet this schedule, with due attention to the importance of the items in question.

The PRESIDENT: I am grateful to the representative of the United States. The word "cost-effective" has crept into the English language on my side of the Atlantic too. In fact, my main concern was to give members of the Council time to prepare for their major interventions in the general debate, and I am very conscious that leaving a day free tomorrow will assist us in maintaining our timetable as we get into the second half of the week.

I shall assume that silence elsewhere means consent, in which case we shall next meet on Wednesday morning, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.